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10 JUL 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR: Acting Deputy Director for Support

SUBJECT : Overweight Employees

1. There are several ways of promoting a weight reduction program in the Agency. The most effective way it seems to us is to follow an earlier formula laid down by the Civil Service Commission to curb problem drinking. This approach combines management responsibility with technical and professional resources and would be essentially as follows:

a. It is our suggestion that the Director state his concerns about overweight personnel to his senior staff. We think this should be done verbally. In stating his views the Director may care to indicate that personnel with obvious excess weight can be identified by supervisors.

b. The supervisor should make known to the individual that he shares the Director's interest and concern for the employee's well-being and his ability to work at his best in his job. Individuals, so identified, might work in concert with their own private physicians or obtain advice and assistance through the consultative services of the Office of Medical Services.

c. Our office will continue to wrestle on a daily basis with problems of obesity as they come to our attention through our examination programs. Our guidance and advice in each instance would be strengthened by an established management attitude as suggested. Those cases coming to us through consultative services would continue to receive individually tailored attention according to specific needs, including examination and referral as required.

SUBJECT TO GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION SCHEDULE
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TWO YEAR INTERVALS AND DECLASSIFIED ON

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2. An alternative to the foregoing is for the OMS to broaden its examination program. This is in our plans for the future. To do so immediately would involve increased costs and additional personnel. While early achievement of goals is desirable, acceleration of programming to achieve weight reduction primarily is difficult to justify.

3. As an adjunct to any weight reduction effort, education is helpful. Our office plans to complement ongoing efforts with a broader education program. We can do this through the printed word in various Agency media and through our lectures and appearances. We do much in this regard now. Although education benefits the cause, it is not an alternative that stands on its own legs. The control of obesity requires some added push.

4. If the suggestion that the Director comment to his senior staff is acceptable, some consideration to periodic reinforcement along similar lines would also be in order. Weight reduction programs are notoriously not successful. Such efforts may be more lasting when linked to an established Agency attitude and sense of discipline.

SIGNED

JOHN R. TIETJEN M.D.

JOHN R. TIETJEN, M. D.
Director of Medical Services

OMS/JRT:jv (10Jul72)

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